

VZCZCXYZ0029
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHVB #1332 3071455
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 031455Z NOV 06
FM AMEMBASSY ZAGREB
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6876
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHDC
RHEFAFM/DIRAFMIC FT DETRICK MD
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC
RUEHRC/USDA WASHDC

UNCLAS ZAGREB 001332

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR DS/DSS, DS/IP, M/MED/JCTRIPLETT
FAS/CMP/DLP WETZEL AND MAGGINNIS
FAS/ITP/EAMED POMEROY AND FLEMING
CA/OCS/ACS KIM CHRISTMAN
USAID FOR E&E/ECA/B/ANNE CONVERY

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [TBIO](#) [SENV](#) [ECON](#) [EAGR](#) [PREL](#) [CASC](#) [KFLU](#) [HR](#)

SUBJECT: CROATIA TAKES REGIONAL ROLE IN AVIAN INFLUENZA, BEGINS
ACTIVE MONITORING

REF: 001241 and previous

¶1. SUMMARY: Although there have been no new incidents of the H5N1 virus in Croatia, the country's designated avian influenza lab has begun active monitoring of wild birds as well as testing poultry suppliers on request. The director of the Poultry Center at the Croatian Veterinary Institute said he also is initiating collaborative testing among 10 countries in southeastern Europe and plans to start a regional information-sharing network. END SUMMARY

¶2. Dr. Vladimir Savic, Poultry Center director, told Econoffs that the lab began active monitoring of birds in their habitats on Oct.

¶21. Dr. Savic said Puris, a domestic poultry supplier, requested that the lab test its poultry. Puris is one of the suppliers to Metro, a German supermarket chain that now requires all of its suppliers to test their poultry. Dr. Savic said he expects to be contacted by other poultry farms in Croatia and that other supermarket chains will follow suit.

¶3. Under Dr. Savic's direction, the Poultry Center also is initiating a "ring test." Designated labs in several other countries will test the same samples to ensure they are using equal standards in identifying H5N1 virus. The ring test will be announced in November and will be conducted in January. He said already Bosnia, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Hungary and Poland have agreed to participate. Dr. Savic said a ring test is one of the requirements for International Standardization Organization (ISO) certification of the lab. Dr. Savic also is working on establishing an information-sharing network to directly connect labs in the region. He said this will enable him to receive information immediately from his counterparts in other countries instead of waiting for information to be released by one of the international organizations.

¶5. Although there is no specific reason to believe bird flu will resurface in Croatia, he said the virus is still a concern in the region and Croatia will continue in its proactive role. Unusually warm weather has delayed bird migration this year, Dr. Savic said.

BRADTKE